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TELEGRAM

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FOLLOWING REPEAT PESHAWAR 152 SENT ACTION SECSTATE:
INFO GENEVA, ISLAMABAD, KABUL, KARACHI ZINAT00.

QUOTE: UNCLAS PESHAWAR 00152

E.O. 12065: N/A
TAGS: SREF, SHUN, PEPR, AF, PK
SUBJECT: UPDATE ON AFGHAN REFUGEES IN N.U.F.P.

1. SUMMARY: TOTAL NUMBER OF AFGHAN REFUGEES IN NWFP IS NOW ABOVE 650,000. CURRENT RATE OF INFUX, WHICH IS RELATED TO SOVIET MILITARY OPERATIONS, IS 30 TO 40,000 PER MONTH. MOST ARE STILL EASTERN PATHANS. GOVERNMENT HAS ESTABLISHED 57 OF THE 80 CAMPS WHICH HAVE BEEN SANCTIONED. REFUGEES HEALTH REMAINS QUITE GOOD, WITH NO SERIOUS PROBLEMS THUS FAR, BUT NEXT FEW MONTHS COULD SEE CHANGE. UNHCR HAS DRAWN UP COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH CARE SCHEME COSTING ONE MILLION DOLLARS FOR 4 MONTHS. MANY FOREIGN ORGANIZATIONS EMPLOYING EXPATRIATES ARE CURRENTLY WORKING

WITH REFUGEES. GOVERNMENT PLANS TO OPEN 50 SCHOOLS IN CAMPS. MANY REFUGEES ARE FINDING EMPLOYMENT IN AT LEAST THIS AREA OF PROVINCE. PAR PUBLIC ATTITUDE REMAINS POSITIVE TOWARD REFUGEES

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BUT SOME SHIFT HAS OCCURRED: END SUMMARY

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2. WE HAVE RECENTLY TALKED WITH SEVERAL PERSONS CONCERNED WITH AFGHAN REFUGEES IN PAKISTAN'S NORTH-WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE (NWFP) TO GET AN UPDATE ON THE SITUATION. INDIVIDUALS INCLUDED REFUGEE COMMISSIONER SHAHSHER ALI KHAN, UNHCR REPRESENTATIVE ROBIN MAC ALPINE, CARE REP. JOHN MC NAMARA, AND JOURNALISTS WHO HAVE RECENTLY VISITED CAMPS. WE HAVE DISCUSSED THE FOLLOWING:

3. NUMBERS: ACCORDING TO REFUGEE COMMISSIONER TOENPTP REFUGEES

HAD BEEN REGISTERED BY MAY 3. PERHAPS 10 TO 15 PERCENT MORE HAVE NOT YET REGISTERED. THUS, TOTAL NUMBER OF REFUGEES IN PROVINCE SHOULD BE WELL ABOVE 650,000.

4. INFLUX: IT IS DIFFICULT TO DETERMINE THE RATE OF INFLUX OF NEW REFUGEES. PRIMARILY, RATE DEPENDS UPON THE EXTENT OF SOVIET OFFENSIVE IN AREAS ACROSS THE DURAND LINE. OFFICIALS HAD ANTICIPATED A HEAVY INFLUX OF REFUGEES WITH THE ADVENT OF SUMMER AS SNOWS MELTED AND PASSES IN THE SULAIMAN RANGE OPENED. INDEED, REFUGEES NUMBERS HAVE INCREASED BY ABOUT 100,000 SINCE JANUARY 1980. HOWEVER, NUMBERS ARE STILL CONSIDERABLY BELOW THAT PAK AUTHORITIES FEARED MIGHT BE THE CASE. REFUGEE COMMISSIONER THINKS THAT A CURRENT AVERAGE OF 30 TO 40 THOUSAND REFUGEES ARE ENTERING EACH MONTH. IF THIS RATE CONTINUES TO END OF YEAR, NUMBERS MAY REACH CLOSE TO A MILLION IN NWFP ALONE.

5. WHO?: MOST OF THE REFUGEES CONTINUE TO BE MEMBERS OF EASTERN PAKHTUN TRIBES. ALTHOUGH THERE ARE A FEW THOUSAND NOORISTANIS AND EVEN FEWER HAZARAS AND BADAKHSI.

6. WHERE?: REFUGEES ARE SCATTERED IN CAMPS ALL OVER THE FRONTIER PROVINCE, EXCEPT THE DISTRICTS OF HAZARA AND SWAT. THEIR ENTRY
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IN THESE TWO DISTRICTS, WHICH HAVE SOME HILLY AREAS, IS RESTRICTED BY THE GOVERNMENT, PROBABLY TO PROTECT AREAS LIMITED FOREST RESOURCES. SINCE MOST OF THE AFGHAN REFUGEES ARE NOT USED TO THE SHELTERING HEAT OF FRONTIER PLAINS (ON A REAL HOT DAY, MERCURY CAN GO UP TO 116 DEGREES) LOCAL OFFICIALS EXPECT SOME MOVEMENT TOWARDS THE HILLS IN TRIBAL AREAS. IF UPHILL MOVEMENT REACHES SIGNIFICANT PROPORTIONS, IT WILL CERTAINLY CAUSE ADMINISTRATIVE AND LOGISTICS PROBLEMS. REFUGEE COMMISSIONER TELLS US.

7. ORGANIZATION: ALL ACTIVITIES PERTAINING TO THE REFUGEES IN

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THE FRONTIER REMAIN UNDER THE PURVIEW OF SHAMSHER ALI KHAN. KHAN, A MOST COMPETENT OFFICER, HAS EARNED CONSIDERABLE RESPECT FOR HIS ABILITY, COOPERATION WITH OUTSIDERS, AND DEVOTION TO HIS DEMANDING JOB. HE NOW HAS REPRESENTATIVES IN EVERY DISTRICT AND CAMP. TO DATE, GOVERNMENT HAS SANCTIONED OPENING 80 CAMPS IN THE FRONTIER, OF WHICH 57 HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED TO DATE. EACH CAMP NOW HAS A COMMANDER (A JUNIOR CIVIL SERVANT) WHO IS SUPPORTED BY A STAFF OF FOUR. COMMANDERS DUTIES INCLUDE REGISTRATION OF INCOMING REFUGEES, DISTRIBUTION OF FOOD AND OTHER ITEMS, MAINTENANCE OF LAW AND ORDER, AND CONDUCTING VISITORS TO THE CAMP. (THE LATTER RESPONSIBILITY REMAINS IMPORTANT, DESPITE CURRENT HOT WEATHER).

8. HEALTH: SO FAR, THE GENERAL HEALTH OF AFGHAN REFUGEES HAS NOT BEEN A SERIOUS PROBLEM. IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THEIR HEALTH STANDARDS HAVE NOT SUFFERED ADVERSLY FROM CAMP CONDITIONS. IN PART, THIS MAY BE ATTRIBUTABLE TO THE FACT THAT HEALTH CONDITIONS IN AFGHANISTAN WERE NOT SIGNIFICANTLY DIFFERENT FROM THOSE PREVAILING IN THE CAMPS. THERE ARE, HOWEVER, SOME RECURRING DISEASES WHICH DEMAND CONTROL. THESE ARE VARIOUS G.I. DISEASES AND EYE AILMENTS, PARTICULARLY THOSE AFFECTING CHILDREN. RECENTLY, THERE WAS A MEASLES SCARE IN BAJAUR AGENCY, WHICH HEALTH AUTHORITIES QUICKLY BROUGHT UNDER CONTROL. ALTHOUGH AT PRESENT HEALTH CONDITIONS ARE QUITE GOOD, THE COMING FEW MONTHS COULD BRING PROBLEMS. SUMMER MEANS NOT ONLY BEASTLY HOT WEATHER, BUT ALSO BRINGS SWARMS OF
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MOSQUITOS AND FLIES, ALONG WITH CHEAP AND ROTTING FRUITS. GIVEN THE AFGHAN ATTITUDE OF DISREGARD FOR SANITATION, IT IS POSSIBLE THAT SOME KIND OF EPIDEMIC OUTBREAK COULD OCCUR BETWEEN NOW AND SEPTEMBER. TO HELP HEAD OFF EPIDEMICS, UNHCR HAS TRIED INTRODUCING PORTABLE JOHNS (FROM OXFAM) ON AN EXPERIMENTAL BASIS. THEIR SUCCESS SEEMS DOUBTFUL IN VIEW OF AFGHAN PREFERENCE FOR CONFINING SUCH ACTIVITIES TO OUT-OF-DOORS.

9. UNHCR HAS DRAWN UP AN INTEGRATED, COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH PLAN IN COLLABORATION WITH THE PROVINCIAL AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENTS. FOR INITIAL PERIOD OF 4 MONTHS, SCHEME WOULD COST OF OVER ONE MILLION US DOLLARS. TO DATE, TWENTY AFGHAN DOCTORS HAVE BEEN EMPLOYED, EACH OF WHOM, ALONG WITH AN ASSISTANT, WILL EVENTUALLY BE RESPONSIBLE FOR FOUR CAMPS. EACH CAMP WILL HAVE THE SERVICES OF A DISPENSER. BOTH UNHCR AND CARE ARE PAYING SPECIAL ATTENTION TO ADEQUATE PROVISION OF DRINKING WATER: AS A TRIAL PROJECT, CARE WILL DO SO IN THOSE

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AREAS WHERE WATER-TABLES ARE COMPARATIVELY HIGH.

10. A NUMBER OF REFUGEE RELATED ORGANIZATIONS CURRENTLY HAVE REPRESENTATIVES IN PESHAWAR, OR RIDING CIRCUIT FROM ISLAMABAD. THESE INCLUDE: UNHCR WITH MAC ALPINE, WHO HAS CONSIDERABLE EXPERIENCE IN THE BUSINESS, MOST RECENTLY WITH ARAKANESE MUSLIMS IN BANGLADESH. ANOTHER EXPATRIATE OFFICER IS EXPECTED THIS MONTH, AND TWO MORE SOON THEREAFTER.

CARE S MACNAMARA HAS A MODEST PROJECT IN HANDICRAFT INDUSTRIES AND WATER SUPPLY.

CMS S LOEL CALAHAN HAS BEEN A CIRCUIT RIDER FROM ISLAMABAD HE WILL BE RETURNING TO THE U.S. IN JUNE, TURNING OVER CHARGE TO ANOTHER AMERICAN NAMED DUBY. CMS HAS ENGAGED COL. (RETO) KHUSHNAGT UL MULK, A RETIRED CONSULATE EMPLOYEE, TO SUPERVISE
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ITS PLANNED MODEST PROJECTS IN CHITRAL.

TERRE DES HOMMES HAD AN ANCIT REP NAMED GRACIELA GAVITO HERE FOR A FEW MONTHS. SHE IS NOW IN LAUSSENE, AND IT IS UNCLEAR IF SHE WILL RETURN. THE ORGANIZATION WAS DISTRIBUTING CLOTHING AND MEDICINE.

INTERNATION RESCUE COMMITTEE: IRC WAS CONSIDERING PROVIDING A NUMBER OF MOBILE HEALTH UNITS. THEIR PROGRAM BOGGED DOWN, DUE TO DIFFERENCES BETWEEN IRC AND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT REGARDING THE PRESENCE OF EXPATRIATE DOCTORS IN THE TRIBAL AREAS. IRC REP DR. HENRY PAULS AND HIS ASSISTANT ALLEN JONES RESIDE IN ISLAMABAD. THE LATTER IS CURRENTLY IN PESHAWAR, LOOKING INTO WAYS THE ORGANIZATION CAN GET INVOLVED IN HEALTH CARE.

AFGHANISTAN RELIEF COMMITTEE: U.S. BASED REP HENRY HANNAH IS CURRENTLY IN THE AREA. HANNAH A FORMER JOURNALIST, ONCE TAUGHT AT THE AMERICAN SCHOOL IN ISLAMABAD. ARC S INTERESTS SEEN DIRECTED TOWARD HEALTH CARE.

SERVE: THIS ORGANIZATION IS AFFILIATED WITH EVANGELICAL CHURCHES IN THE U.S. AT LEAST THREE ANCITS AND ONE EUROPEAN ARE IN PESHAWAR, INCLUDING THE MAGNETS, WHO SPENT SEVERAL YEARS WITH MOOR EYE MISSION IN AFGHANISTAN. HEALTH CARE AND HANDICRAFTS SEEMS TO BE THEIR MAIN INTEREST...

11. EDUCATION: GOVERNMENT HAS SANCTIONED NO SCHOOLS FOR

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AFGHAN CHILDREN AND FUNDS HAVE BEEN MADE AVAILABLE TO THE PROVINCIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT. LOCAL OFFICIALS SAY THAT MOST OF THESE SCHOOLS WILL START FUNCTIONING BY THE END OF MAY, WITH AFGHAN TEACHERS WHEREVER AVAILABLE.

12. EMPLOYMENT: AFGHANS ARE REGARDED HERE AS ENTERPRISING PEOPLE, AND THE REFUGEES HAVE CONFIRMED THIS BELIEF. MANY WHO HAD CAPITAL HAVE PURCHASED SMALL VEHICLES AND ARE RUNNING THEM AS TAXIS. OTHERS WHO BROUGHT CARS, TRUCKS, OR BUSES ARE NOW PLYING THEM

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ALL OVER THE PROVINCE. (CONSUL COUNTED 16 TRUCKS IN ONE REFUGEE CAMP) OTHERS HAVE OPENED STREET-SIDE STALLS, OR DISPLAY THEIR WARES ON HAND-CARTS. SOME HAWK FABRICS IN THE NARROW STREETS OF PESHAWAR CITY. THOSE WITHOUT CAPITAL WORK AS DAY LABOURERS IN CONSTRUCTION, ROAD BUILDING, OR AGRICULTURE. A NUMBER OF AGENCIES, LIKE UNHCR, ARE ENCOURAGING SELF-HELP PROJECTS SUCH AS CARPET WEAVING TRAINING CENTERS. CARE'S INCOME-GENERATION PROGRAM INCLUDES PROVISION OF BASIC SEWING AND EMBROIDING KITS TO WOMEN IN THE REFUGEE CAMPS.

13. PUBLIC ATTITUDES: WHEN AFGHAN REFUGEES STARTED COMING INTO PAKISTAN TWO YEARS AGO, THEY WERE GENERALLY WELCOMED BY THE LOCAL PUBLIC WHILE GENEROUSLY EXTENDED ALL POSSIBLE HELP. AT THAT TIME, SYMPATHY AND HOSPITALITY WERE THE TWO MOST DISCERNABLE SENTIMENTS AMONG THE PEOPLE IN FRONTIER. THE PUBLIC'S ATTITUDE REMAINS FAVOURABLE TODAY, BUT NOW THERE ARE ALSO VISIBLE SIGNS OF IMPATIENCE WITH THE REFUGEES' PROLONGED STAY AND THEIR SWELLING NUMBERS. TO SOME EXTENT, THE NEGATIVE FEELINGS TOWARDS THE REFUGEES ARE GENERATED BY THEIR OWN BEHAVIOUR. A FEW REFUGEE FAMILIES LIVE IN

STYLE, COMPLETE WITH EXPENSIVE CARS, A FACT WHICH DOES NOT CONFORM WITH LOCAL IMAGES OF REFUGEE STATUS. THE LOCAL POPULATION IS ALSO FED UP WITH DISUNITY AMONG THE LOCAL AFGHAN GROUPS. FURTHER, REFUGEES' NUMBERS HAVE PUT INCREASING PRESSURE ON LOCAL FACILITIES, THUS AFFECTING LOCAL RESIDENTS. FOR INSTANCE, TAXI FARES, HOUSE RENTS, AND PRICES OF MANY COMMODITIES HAVE INCREASED IN PESHAWAR, WHICH BY LOCAL STANDARDS WAS AN EXPENSIVE CITY TO LIVE IN EVEN BEFORE THEY CAME. LITTERING AND FILTH SPREAD AROUND BY THE REFUGEES IS ALSO A SOURCE OF FRICTION. ONE HOUSE WIFE RECENTLY REMARKED ABOUT HER AFGHAN NEIGHBOURS, 'I WISH THEM HELL, BUT MAY GOD SEND THEM HOME AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. . . . NONETHELESS, WHILE THERE HAS BEEN SOME SHIFT IN ATTITUDE, AND IN A FEW CASES EVEN SOME

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HOSTILITY TOWARDS THE REFUGEES. RELATIONS WITH THEIR HOSTS ARE STILL REASONABLY GOOD. THE RECENT SERIES OF EXPLOSIONS IN SEVERAL PLACES IN FRONTIER, HOWEVER, FOR WHICH AFGHANS HAVE BEEN BLAMED, HAS CAUSED CONSIDERABLE NEGATIVE FEELING TOWARDS REFUGEES. AMONG MANY, THEY ARE NOW REGARDED AS A SECURITY PROBLEM AS WELL.
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